

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

Constitution High School₉₋₁₂



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[!\[\]\(d66ff64371a51729ac8c1cdaa685ba6f_img.jpg\) Get Directions](#)

About Us

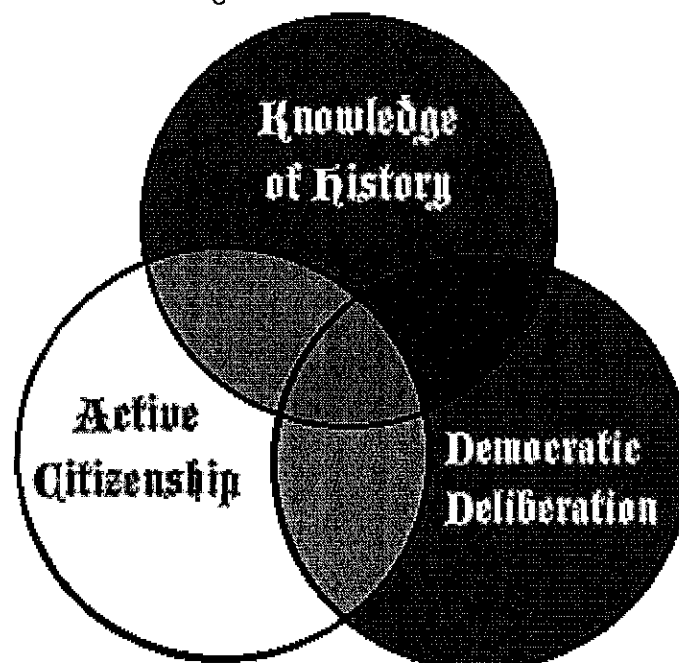
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Constitution High School

Our Vision

Constitution High School is a unique, small, college preparatory, city-wide admission school. It is the only Philadelphia School District high school whose theme is Law, Democracy, and History. The school program capitalizes upon the unparalleled historical resources of the city to deliver a program that emphasizes the study of all social sciences through the American experience. The three instructional themes embedded throughout instruction are:



Administration

- Dr. Thomas Davidson, Principal
- D. Granato, Administrative Assistant
- C. Green-Morson, Dean of Students

Social Studies

- C. Ackerman, 10th Grade American Studies, Constitutional Law
- F. Gold, 9th Grade Constitution, Historiography, African American History; 10th Grade American Studies
- A. Lofaro, 10th Grade American Studies, English IV
- A. Mahdi, 11th Grade AP American History
- C. Stanton, 12th Grade World History, AP World History, Psychology

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

National History Day

National History Day (NHD) is a highly regarded academic organization for elementary and secondary school students.

Each year, more than half a million students, encouraged by thousands of teachers nationwide participate in the NHD contest. Students choose historical topics related to a theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research through libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews and historic sites. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics' significance in history, students present their work in original papers, exhibits, performances and documentaries. These products are entered into competitions in the spring at local, state and national levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates in a national competition each June held at the University of Maryland at College Park.

In addition to discovering the exciting world of the past, NHD also helps students develop the following attributes that are critical for future success:

- * critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- * research and reading skills
- * oral and written communication and presentation skills
- * self esteem and confidence
- * a sense of responsibility for and involvement in the democratic process

More than 5 million students have gone on to careers in business, law, medicine and countless other disciplines where they are putting into practice what they learned through NHD.

Service Learning

Each year, students will actively learn and give back to our community through our school wide service learning initiatives. Keeping with our commitment to Active Citizenship, students must complete 15 hours of independent community service (on their own time) each year. If students do not complete 15 hours, it will be rolled over into the next year. Additionally, 30 hours are required by June of each year in school wide efforts. A sampling of school wide efforts include:

1. Situation in Darfur
2. Childhood Cancer Research
3. Community Giving
4. Fundred \$/Hurricane Katrina
5. Historical Garden
6. Helping the Homeless
7. You Speak My Language
8. School Store/Student Lounge
9. Nutrition
10. Pollution/Silent Killers
11. Public Service Announcements
12. Recycling/Environment
13. School Beautification
14. Tutoring Program

We are looking forward to the input of incoming freshmen and new staff to determine how our program will grow for the current school year.

Dual Enrollment – Cheyney University

Constitution High School has partnered with Cheyney University to offer courses, earning high school and college credit, through the School District of Philadelphia's Dual Enrollment program. These courses are offered during school time at nearby Cheyney University Urban Center. Courses offered to date included: College Survey Mathematics, Non-Calculus Based Physics, Introduction to Psychology, African American History, Entrepreneurship, and English I. We look forward to the development of additional offerings in the future. In addition, students are eligible to enroll in the many other courses offered at nearby colleges and universities through the Dual Enrollment program.

Special Education/English Language Learners/Gifted

Constitution High School utilizes a full inclusion model of instruction. In addition support personnel exist to address to students' IEP and developmental needs through a variety of serves.

Constitution High School Academic Credits:

Ninth Grade	Credit
The Constitution	0.5
Historiography	0.5
African American History	1.0
Algebra 1 or Geometry	1.0
English I	1.0
Spanish I	1.0
Physical Science	1.0
Art History	2.0
Service Learning	0.25
Tenth Grade	
American Studies	2.0
Geometry or Algebra II	1.0
English II	1.0
Spanish II	1.0
Biology	1.0
Health & PE	1.0
Art History	1.0
SAT Prep	1.0
Service Learning	0.25
Eleventh Grade	
AP American History	2.0
English III	1.0
Algebra II/ SAT Prep	2.0
Chemistry	1.0

Health & PE	0.5
Electives	1.0
Service Learning	0.25
Electives	
Sociology	1.0
Constitutional Law	1.0
AP Environmental Science	1.0
SAT Prep	1.0
Music	1.0
Dual Enrollment Courses (Cheyney University)*	Open
Twelfth Grade	
International Studies	1.0
English IV or AP American Literature (Dual Enrollment)*	1.0
Physics (Dual Enrollment)	1.0
Health & PE	0.5
Dual Enrollment Courses*/Electives	Open
Service Learning	0.25

*Special Note: Constitution High School has partnered with Cheyney University for students to attend the University's nearby Urban Campus to earn college and high school credits in the School District dual enrollment program.

CONSTITUTION

Governing Citizens of

CONSTITUTION HIGH SCHOOL

The following Constitution was created and amended during the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years.

Article I: Legislative Branch

Section I: Purpose

The legislative powers are given to the Congress of Constitution High School. The Congress is made up of the Faculty Senate and the House of Students.

Section II: Qualifications

Must maintain a C average with no failing grades.

A student who earns a "3" in citizenship at any time may not serve in the House of Students in any capacity. Speaker of the House of Students must have a B average.

All students must complete or maintain a passing grade in the Constitution course in order to serve in the House of Students. Starting September 17 each year, no candidate shall have more than 5 unexcused absences or lateness per marking period. No more than two EH-20 documented violations of the Student Code of Conduct. In the event of suspension, a judicial committee may be called to decide if removal from office is necessary. Every member of the Faculty Senate must be currently appointed/assigned to Constitution High School.

Section III: Election Process

There shall be two elected representatives from each advisory. These candidates are elected by their respective advisories. Advisory representatives will be nominated on the second Tuesday in November. School wide elections for House of Students positions will be on the third Tuesday in November. Students can only vote for representatives in their respective advisories. One vote per student and majority rules. When tallying votes, one non-candidate student and one non-advisor shall determine results. Each advisory may make campaign rules that do not fundamentally change the election process. Term of office is from November of one year to November of the following year. Upon a removal from office, a special election within that advisory will occur.

Section IV: Duties of Office

House of Students will debate bills and proposals.

Majority of representatives must agree on the Bill before passing it on to the Faculty Senate. House of Students will set the standards as to what must be included in a proposed bill. If a bill is changed or vetoed by the Executive branch, a 2/3 vote is required from each House to either agree on proposed changes, or to override the veto.

In the Faculty Senate, the majority of those present at the meeting or voting in absentee

must agree and then pass the bill to the Principal. If they do not agree and the Bill did not originate in the Senate, they must send it back to the House of Students for review. If changes are needed, a committee will be formed comprised of representatives from the Senate and House.

The House of Students represents the students and gives them voice and therefore can create School Activity Committees which have the power to propose Special Events and Activities. It will be the duty of both the Legislative and Executive branches to implement proposals. Legislature confirms Executive branch appointments to the Supreme Court.

Section V: Vacancies

If a position becomes vacant, students not holding a position in the school government may be nominated and elected to fill the vacancy provided s/he meets the qualifications for that office. Election will follow the procedures established in this Constitution.

Section VI: Removal from Office

Representatives may be impeached from office for violating any of the qualifications of office. Faculty Senate and Student House Representatives will decide on impeachment from office by a 2/3 vote. In the case of three (3) unexcused government meetings or inappropriate conduct after a meeting has been called to order, an impeachment process may be initiated by the House of Students. The Judicial Branch will decide if removal is necessary.

Article II: Executive Branch

Section I: Purpose

The purpose of the Executive Branch is to enforce school rules and to communicate with the principal and the student body. The Executive Cabinet will serve as liaison between students and principal.

Section II: Qualifications

Executive Cabinet candidates must be students at Constitution High School.

Freshmen at Constitution High can be candidates. Candidates must maintain a C average with no failing grades. Starting September 17 each year, no candidate shall have more than 5 unexcused absences or lateness per marking period.

A student who earns a "3" in citizenship at any time may not serve on the Executive Cabinet in any capacity. No more than two EH-20 documented violations of the Student Code of Conduct. In the event of suspension, a judicial committee may be called to decide if removal from office is necessary.

Section III: Election Process

Students can be nominated for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These positions will make up the Executive Cabinet. Executive officials serve for a term, which is the November of the year elected to the following November. Inauguration must take place within the

same month of election. Each student gets one vote.

If there is a tie another vote will be taken within 48 hours.

To be elected to the Executive Branch, a majority vote is needed. If a majority is not reached, there will be a run-off election between the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes.

Section IV: Duties

The President will be the voice of the student body and will meet regularly with the Principal.

The President will reinforce and communicate to students all information and rules.

The President will give a State of Student address.

The President runs the House of Students' meeting.

The President, with advice from the Cabinet and Congress, can make treaties or alliances with other schools for the purpose of student activities.

The Executive branch will be provided with an office to conduct school-wide business.

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The President of the student body is a voting member of the Faculty Senate. The Vice President prepares the agenda for each House of Students meeting.

The Vice President of the student body is a voting member of the House of Students. The Secretary records, reads, and updates the minutes at every meeting.

The Treasurer manages the finances of government. Executive Cabinet reviews proposed bills before consideration by the Principal. The Cabinet has the power to return a bill to Congress for revision. Any final proposed bill must be approved and signed by the Principal.

Section V: Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy due to excessive absence of the President, the Vice President assumes the Presidency for the remainder of the absence based on a majority vote from the House of Students. The Secretary or Treasurer will be given the option to assume the remainder of the Vice President's term. Whenever a position in the Executive Branch becomes vacant due to graduation, it will be opened to the student body for a general election according to the qualifications stipulated in the Constitution. In case of impeachment called by the Judicial Branch and removed with 2/3 vote from Congress, the House of Students and members of the Executive Branch may run for office in which selection is confirmed by Congress through a majority vote.

Section VI: Removal from Office

Any member of the Executive branch may be impeached from office for violating any of the qualifications of office.

Faculty Senate and Student House Representatives will decide on impeachment from office by a

2/3 vote.

Article III: Judicial Branch

Section I: Purpose

The overall power of the Judicial Branch is to interpret and declare which rules are unconstitutional. The court is also a vehicle to resolve student conflicts.

Section II: Qualifications

To serve as a judge one must be at least in the 10th grade, with the exception of 2006 candidates. Must exhibit the ability to think objectively.

Cannot have more than three official detentions.

Starting September 17 each year, no candidate shall have more than 5 unexcuse

absences or lateness per marking period. Must get at least a B in Social Studies and nothing below a C in any other subject. When serving, judges must maintain at least a C average and will be given two weeks to improve grade. A student who earns a "3" in citizenship at any time may not serve on the Judicial Branch in any capacity.

No more than one (1) EH-20 documented violation of the Student Code of Conduct. In the event of suspension and/or more than one EH-20 documented violation, the accused judge can be called into impeachment by the President and removed by a 2/3 vote from both Houses.

Section III: Selection Process:

Principal and Student President nominate the two faculty judges and Congress will confirm the nominations with a majority vote. Candidates for student judge seats will be selected and interviewed by the two confirmed faculty judges. Seven student judges will be appointed. Judges hold office for a whole school year.

Section IV: Duties

To review all cases and determine if the rule in question is constitutional.

Students and faculty judges shall resolve the issue in question within the guidelines of the School District of Philadelphia. Cases may be put before the court by students through a completed incident report given to a judge. This does not preclude the authority of the Principal to adjudicate relevant issues.

Section V: Vacancies

If a position becomes vacant, students not holding a position in the school government may

be nominated and elected to fill the vacancy provided s/he meets the qualifications for that office. Appointments will follow the procedures established in this Constitution.

Section VI: Removal from Office

Judges not performing their duties while in office and unable to maintain qualifications will be removed from office by Congress through the impeachment process.

Article IV: Amending the Constitution

Section I: Purpose

The purpose of the amending process is to correct problems found in the school's Constitution.

This process is necessary to insure that present and future students have a voice in the operation of school government.

Section II: Qualifications

In order to serve on the Amending Committee, the Constitution High student must be passing every class. A student who earns a "3" in citizenship at any time may not serve on the Amending Committee in any capacity.

Section III: Elections

One student from each advisory will be chosen by majority vote.

Section IV: Duties

Committee members will create a mechanism to communicate with the student body, such as a suggestion box.

Section V: Removal from Office

No more than two EH-20 documented violations of the Student Code of Conduct. In the event of suspension, a judicial committee may be called to decide if removal from office is necessary.

Section VI: Amending Process

Amending Committee proposes possible amendments to the House of Students.

If the proposed amendment passes 2/3 of both Houses then each advisory will consider

the amendment. If the proposed amendment fails to receive the required 2/3 vote from either House, 4/5 of the school may overrule that vote and bring the question of amendment to the advisories for a vote.

Each member of the Committee reports back to his or her advisory.

If 3/4 of the school population votes in favor of the proposed amendment, then the Constitution is amended.

Article V: Ratification

3/4 of the school population is needed for ratification of this Constitution.

Article VI: Separation of Powers

Section I: Potential to Abuse Powers

Students can hold only one position per term in the school government.

STUDENT BILL OF RIGHTS

I. All students of Constitution High School are protected under the same laws and rights (under the United States Constitution) and are to be treated equally regardless of sex, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race, color, or creed.

II. In accordance with the U.S. Constitution, judicial opinions, and Congressional legislation, laws in the school shall not abridge a student's right to speech, press, petition, peaceful assembly, and protest.

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III. The right of students at Constitution High School to be secured in their person, lockers, papers, and effects will not be violated unless there is reasonable cause.

IV. Students and Staff may appeal any Constitution High School policy so long as the policy does not contradict the policies of the School District of Philadelphia.

V. Transfer students who did not complete the Constitution course due to scheduling difficulties are still qualified to run for any position that requires the completion of the Constitution course. Candidates must pass a test on the Constitution given by a Constitution High social studies teacher in order to be eligible to campaign for elected office.

Making Constitution High School Government Work for You

Students and staff members are the most powerful voices in our school. CHS wants to see students and staff proactive regarding the issues in our school and voice opinions on how to create an even better educational experience. In particular, students have many avenues in which to voice their opinions and create change in our school. This section can be used as a guide for students to petition government, create a bill, and petition the court.

A petition should contain the following and can be submitted to any government representative:

1. name of organization or person presenting petition
2. problem that needs addressing
3. signatures of those whom support proposal

What should be included in a bill if I decide to write one?

Writing a Bill: Use the law making process if a new rule should be created or if an older rule needs amending. Bills must be typed and sponsored by a member of Congress (House of Students/Faculty Senate). Any member of our school community may write a bill however it must be introduced by a current member of Congress. Each bill must include the following:

1. ☐ Name of bill
1. ☐ Author of bill
1. ☐ Why is the bill necessary?
1. ☐ How will the bill address the problem described above?
1. ☐ If necessary, how will the bill address those that break this new/ amended law?
1. ☐ Does this bill need funding? If so, where will the funds come from?
1. ☐ When should the bill go into effect if passed? Will it expire after a certain time period?

*See the Dress Code bill on page 16 for an example

When should I and how can I petition the school court?

Constitution High School has a school court that contains faculty and student judges. Students and staff may petition this court if they are unable to resolve a conflict through other avenues. It is always best to resolve conflicts through mediation rather than using our court system. However, if all other avenues have been exhausted, then the court may be able to intervene. It is appropriate to petition our court when a law is considered unconstitutional or when a law is being broken and other avenues to correct behavior have failed. A complainant must fill out a court petition (Room 302) and submit grievance to a judge or government advisor. Petitions must discuss the incident and the rule that is being challenged or broken. Also, evidence must be included that supports the grievance. Finally, it is up to the discretion of the judges if the case shall be heard. Do not expect case to be heard just because it was submitted.